The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news comments and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning in the legislative, executive and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1517 — WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, MAY 7, 1940 — GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer — VOL. 30, NO. 19

FACING *the* FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

May Day has come and gone without casualty or bloodshed but the demonstrations put on by the Communists this year have left a bad taste in the mouths of the great mass of loyal American workers.

The Communist International issued a manifesto from Moscow on April 30, the eve of May Day, which said:

"The American bourgeoisie is stretching its hand to Iceland, Greenland and the Anglo-French possessions in the Caribbean Sea."

Isn't that a mouthful? Can you beat the nerve of these Soviet leaders, whose hands are still dripping blood from the pillage of Poland and the rape of Finland, daring to malign falsely and slander our country and our people?

The signers of this manifesto included Joseph V. Stalin and Earl Browder. The next morning Mr. Browder, out on bail pending appeal of his conviction for passport fraud, was bravely marching the streets of New York at the head of a contingent of open and secret Communists in a May Day parade.

The keynote of this parade was "peace." It is amusing yet horrible to see how glibly the Communists adopt the theory of peace for their party line in summer months outside of Soviet Russia while that totalitarian state wages murderous warfare against any of its neighboring countries weak enough for the Communist bullies to tackle.

The Stalin-Hitler Alliance

Soviet Russia's own policies are bad enough. But its alliance with Nazi Germany is completely indefensible. A typical illustration of how the Stalin-Hitler pact affects the Communist Party line is found in another paragraph from the May Day manifesto:

"Countering the Anglo-French violation of Scandinavian neutrality, the Germans occupied Denmark and landed troops by air and sea in Norway."

Apparently the only country in the world which dares to defend the Nazi invasion of Norway and Denmark is Soviet Russia. No other nation is ruled by despots so contemptuous of human decency.

In Soviet Russia the workers cannot speak out. There isn't the slightest pretense of free speech. Elections are non-existent because the dictator Stalin can and does line up anyone who offends him before a firing squad.

Yet the May Day manifesto exhorts workers in the United States to fight for free speech and defend civil rights, privileges which are accorded freely to all American citizens, including such as Earl Browder.

In this country certain labor organizations follow the Communist Party line dictated from Moscow. These organizations are aligned with the CIO. The leader of the CIO, Mr. John L. Lewis, is following the Party Line himself. His actions and the actions of Communist leaders of the infested CIO unions are a disgrace to the American labor movement. Even in the CIO disgust with such policies is spreading and a rebellion within the CIO ranks against such leadership is daily growing more intense.

Reds March in Cuba and Mexico

It is also interesting to observe the celebrations of May Day in other American countries. In Havana, Cuba, the labor movement staged a four-hour parade and all work was suspended. Lazaro Pena, Communist secretary of the Cuban labor movement to whom John L. Lewis sent his official regards recently, charged that the policy of the United States was "to get control of all the countries of the Americas." Senor Pena declared that the United States was preparing rapidly to drag American nations into the European war.

There we see evidence of Soviet Russia's hostility to the United States and the desperate effort Stalin is making to stir up animosity against the United States among our neighboring republics.

Would you think that any group of Americans would lend themselves to further such anti-American propaganda? Unbelievable as it may seem, the New York Times that "a contingent of CIO marine workers from American ships" in Havana harbor took part in the parade. The National Maritime Union, to which these sailors belong, is dominated by Communists.

In Mexico City the "workers militia", organized by the Communist wing in the labor movement marched in a May Day parade. There, too, the same type of banner and propaganda following the Communist Party Line existed everywhere evident. But it was somewhat encouraging to note that Vincente Lombardo Toledano, the Red dictator of Mexican labor, and a pal of John L. Lewis, got pelted with orange peels and other refuse thrown by some of the marchers. Apparently, the workers are getting fed up with Communist leadership in Mexico, too.

A. F. L. Exposes Wild Pension Plans; Offers Workable Security Program

Townsend, CIO and "Ham and Eggs" Schemes Assailed In New Pamphlet.

Washington, D. C.—Rattle-brained pension schemes which promise the moon to gullible aged persons were exposed and assailed by the American Federation of Labor.

President William Green sent to affiliated organizations copies of a new pamphlet called "A Rainbow Pot of Gold for Old Age," which blasts the fallacies of the Townsend, "Ham and Eggs" and CIO pension schemes and presents the honest, workable program of the American Federation of Labor.

Summed up, the A. F. of L. program provides for the following objectives:

1. "Jobs first with good wages and working conditions.

2. "Insurance next to provide income and a reasonable protection against huge expenditures during periods of unemployment and illness for the worker and his dependents.

3. "Pensions in old age which is in reasonable proportion to the whole program of social protection."

The first plank, the A. F. of L. pamphlet declares, "organized labor can honestly support and for which our millions of workers can reasonably work. That is a program worth pushing for, one which keeps a fair relationship between individual and social effort."

In preface to the pamphlet, Mr. Green charged:

"Pension baiting you with Townsend plans, 'ham and eggs' or soft promises of $60 a month when you are fifty, sixty or sixty-five, if single, $90 if married, never tell what the plan will cost, who will pay for it, or prove that you will really get it."

This the pamphlet proceeds to do. It shows that the CIO pension scheme of $60 a month to single persons and $90 a month to married couples would cost the Government over six and a third billions of dollars a year if paid only to persons over sixty. Yet in no year to date in the nation's history has the entire total of Federal tax receipts aggregated over and a quarter billion dollars. In other words this impossible scheme would take all the money the Government raises by taxes and leave nothing for the operation of the Government.

But that is only the beginning of the story. For the proportion of old people in the population is steadily increasing and it is estimated in the pamphlet that 14 billion dollars a year would be the bill for such pensions by 1980.

Who is to pay for such pensions? The Government?

"Let no worker deceive himself that these huge sums could be raised without new taxes which he would have to pay," the pamphlet says. "He would have to pay them in various forms and necessaries during his productive years to provide more income for each retired person than he has for the members of his own family.

"There is no escape in the payment of pensions which permits the Government to supply some people with income without taking money for those incomes from other people. The care of the aged is an obligation which we have always had and which we expect to meet, but the amount of such care must be reasonably related to our total income and the other demands made upon it."

The pamphlet made the same devastating analysis of the Townsend and "ham and eggs" plans.

In an accompanying letter, Mr. Green pointed out that the 1939 convention of the A. F. of L. unanimously went on record against too great extravagance in one phase of the social security program at the expense of tax increases for workers and failure to provide for other pressing needs such as more adequate unemployment compensation, disability coverage and health insurance. The convention decided that the next step in improving old age insurance should be to widen coverage in the social security program.

"The American Federation of Labor is working to get the coverage of the law extended," Mr. Green said in his letter. "Latest monthly program of social insurance is brought in a well-rounded fashion to more adequate levels, it may be possible to improve the benefits of old age insurance.

"In the meantime, I believe we should serve our membership by telling them honestly that they will gain more from a well-rounded development of the social security program than by hoping for the enactment of legislation providing large pensions for everyone over some specified age."

News Briefs

HOUSE KILLS CHANGES IN WAGE-HOUNS ACT

Washington, D. C.—The House killed for this session any legislation to amend the Wages and Hours Act when it voted, 205 to 175, to recommit the original Labor Committee bill, which had proposed mild changes in the law.

This coup de grace was administered after the House had first killed by a vote of 211 to 171 a substitute bill which had been amended virtually out of recognition. Another substitute, which had been similarly treated, previously had been rejected.

The House action was a distinct victory for the American Federation of Labor which opposed any amendment of the Wage-Hour Act at this session.

2500 HOTEL WORKERS GAIN IN NEW CONTRACT

Washington, D. C.—Wage agreements covering 2,500 workers in twelve of Washington's largest hotels were arrived at after prolonged negotiations by the joint executive board of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers International Alliance and the hotel managements.

Pay raises, shorter hours and a modified closed shop were among the benefits gained by the union for the employes. The hotels covered by the agreement are the Ambassador, Carlton, Continental, Harrington, Lafayette, Lee Sherraton, New Colonial, Raleigh, Roger Smith, Shoreham, Wardman Park and Willard. Other hotels previously had signed agreements with the union.

HARRISON URGES PROMPT RAILROAD BILL ACTION

Washington, D. C.—Strong opposition is reflected in the Wheeler-Lea Transportation Bill back to conference was voiced by George M. Harrison, president of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, on the ground that such action would be likely to prevent enactment of the legislation at this session of Congress. He said the bill proposes unification of regulation and treatment of the several methods of transportation and would improve the interests of the 2100 railroad and express employes for whom he spoke.

"Unregulated, subsidized water and motor carrier transportation is taking a heavy toll of railroad employment and business," he declared. "It is estimated that 185,000 railroad jobs have been lost because of present unfair, discriminatory transportation policies and lack of Federal regulation of these other modes of transportation. There is no danger to railroad employment in this bill but on the contrary it should benefit it."

LADIES' GARMENT WORKERS CONVENTION OPENS MAY 27

New York, N. Y.—The 1940 convention of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union will open here May 27 and continue in session for two weeks. One of the important questions to be considered by the 650 delegates will be affiliation with the American Federation of Labor.

The Ladies' Garment Workers Union was one of the founders of the CIO, but withdrew two years ago following the decision of the CIO to establish itself as a permanent organization. David Dubinsky, president of the union, will make the keynote address. The union claims a membership of 250,000.

MILLINERY STRIKE ENDS IN VICTORY FOR WORKERS

Chicago, Ill.—Striking employes of the American Needle and Novelty Company here won important gains in the settlement of their controversy.

The United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers Union gained exclusive collective bargaining rights, a closed shop, a flat 5 per cent pay increase for all workers and additional 2½ per cent boost for skilled operators.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS WIN POWER COMPANY CONTRACT

Minneapolis, Minn.—The Northern States Power Co. signed a union shop contract with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers covering 1,000 workers in five power plants. Wage increases and arbitration of other matters in dispute were provided in the contract.

The agreement was signed in the office of Gov. Harold Stassen to whom a fact-finding committee had submitted the charges against the company with repeated violations of the former contract.

MACHINISTS SIGN UP 145 MORE COMPANIES

Washington, D. C.—The International Association of Machinists, A. F. of L. affiliate, negotiated new and renewed agreements with 145 firms in three weeks, F. D. Lauderman, general vice president of the association announced. Higher wage scales, the 40-hour week and vacations with pay featured the agreements which included 48 cities in 17 states.

U. S. Court Exonerates Teamsters; Dismisses Anti-Trust Indictments

Washington, D. C.—Federal Judge F. Dickinson Letts ordered a directed verdict of acquittal for the officials of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters indicted here under the anti-trust laws.

The decision was hailed by President William Green and Defense Counsel Joseph A. Padway as a great victory for the American Federation of Labor.

They called the court's ruling a severe blow to the campaign undertaken by Assistant Attorney General Thurman Arnold to prosecute activities of labor organizations under the Sherman Act.

Judge Letts handed down his decision at the conclusion of two weeks of testimony presented by the prosecuting attorney. Mr. Padway argued for a directed verdict of acquittal. The prosecutor objected. A minute after he had ended his arguments, Judge Letts handed down his sweeping decision.

He ruled:

1.—That the defendants had done nothing other than they had a right to do as officers of the union.

2.—That their conduct did not violate the Sherman Act.

3.—That none of the defendants could be charged with criminal intent.

The Judge then threw out the indictments which were based on a jurisdictional dispute between the Teamsters Union and the International Union of Operating Engineers, th t has since been settled.

Those acquitted of all charges by order of Judge Letts were:

Lonal Secor, 630, the District of Columbia local, of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

Thomas O'Brien, international representative of the union; Stewart Keyser and Aubrey Stevens, business agents of the local, and Charles Bell, president of the local; and Linwood A. Trailman, secretary.

President Green commented:

"This court decision is a distinct victory for the American Federation of Labor. It should demonstrate to the entire country the truth of our contention that Assistant Attorney General Thurman Arnold has gone far afield in seeking to proscribe the lawful activities of labor unions by the filing of wholesale indictments under the anti-trust laws.

"It was Mr. Arnold's theory that the Federal Government could regulate and control the activities of labor unions by invoking the anti-trust laws against them. Now this theory has been struck down in the second test in the Federal Courts. Both times it has fallen to pieces in the face of the facts, in law and common sense. Federal Judge Davis in St. Louis recently dismissed indictments against officials of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters. Judge Letts, in the District of Columbia Federal District Court did the same thing in the Teamsters case. After presentation of prosecution testimony for two weeks and without finding it necessary to hear the defense, Judge Letts threw Mr. Arnold's case out the window."

Mr. Padway said:

"The victory for the American Federation of Labor is two-fold. The court held that workers may strike in support of their claims to jurisdiction and not be held guilty of violation of the Sherman Act. This opposes of one of the counts under which Assistant Attorney General Thurman Arnold announced he would prosecute labor unions.

"Secondly, the court upset another theory of Mr. Arnold's, that a strike against an established bargaining agency is in violation of the Sherman Act. Under this case, the members of a union may strike despite the fact and because of the fact that employers were dealing with members of the Operating Engineers Union.

"The second question of whether labor unions are exempted from prosecution under the Sherman Act by the Clayton Act was not involved in this case and was not passed upon by the Court."

Lewis and the Negro Congress

(The following is taken from the Congressional Record of April 30, 1940)

REP. ROBERT S. ALLEN (D. Pa.)—I read with amazement and despair that a declaration was passed and applauded by the Negro Congress wherein it was stated that if the United States ever went to war against Russia they would refuse to defend this country. That is treason. That statement should be repudiated by all Negroes who love this country and who believe in democracy. No intolerance, no Ku Klux Klan outrage has ever done the Negro as much as those deluded members of their own race. The greatest enemies of our colored minority in the United States are those who pass such vicious resolutions as that adopted by the Negro Congress.

No group in America is doing more to undermine the rights of our Negro people than the leadership of the Negro Congress who are obviously in the pay of the Communist Party in America. (Applause.)

John L. Lewis is equally culpable with the author of that treasonable resolution passed by the Negro Congress. Lewis gladly invited the Negro Congress to join his Labor Non-Partisan League, which is the political arm of the CIO. Inferentially he approves the composition and program of any group which he invites to affiliate with the CIO. There can be no doubt in the mind of anyone that in this instance Mr. Lewis has encouraged the spread of disloyalty and treason.

Much credit must be given to A. Philip Randolph of New York, head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, who declined reelection for a third term as president and has since resigned from the Congress because it had been financed by the Communist Party.

White people, as well as Negroes, should join in open condemnation of the Negro Communist Congress, its sponsors, and its executive committee which, I hear, are responsible for stirring up this turmoil among the Negroes. (Applause.) This Negro Congress is nothing more nor less than a communistic affair. And certain organizations who characterize themselves as liberal institutions are inviting these communistic Negroes to join them. And I refer to John L. Lewis specifically.

Maiden Affirms Loyalty of Negroes; Denounces National Negro Congress

Washington, D. C.—Congress Maiden, Southern Negro leader for the American Federation of Labor, charged that the National Negro Congress has been utterly destroyed by the white Communists and CIO members from the East."

Mr. Maiden, who resigned from the Congress along with A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, declared the Negro workers of this country are loyal to American principles and to the American Federation of Labor.

Denouncing the Communist-CIO coup, by which the Congress was dragooned into the Red party line, Mr. Maiden said he was certain that 300,000 Negro members of A. F. of L. unions in the South is sympathetic to the National Negro Congress.

"Our Negroes of the South will never follow the Communistic program nor will they ever become a part of the CIO, nor do they want anything to do with Mr. Lewis' Labor Non-Partisan League.

"I tried to represent my people of the South in the convention of the National Negro Congress but the Communists herded me down, simply because I, as a member of the Committee on Constitution, tried to put into the constitution of the National Negro Congress a clause saying that no one except Negroes in labor unions could become members of the Congress.

"Our people know that the American Federation of Labor and CIO have been fighting for elimination of the poll tax as a condition of voting. The poll tax has been eliminated in fact but a few states, and it was the constant fight of the American Federation of Labor down through the years that removed the poll tax in so many of our states.

"The same device of proposed anti-lynching bills. The American Federation of Labor has been interested in this matter, and the fact that I'm going to Washington has been greatly reduced due to the assistance to the intelligent campaign which the American Federation of Labor and the State Federations of Labor in the Southern states have put on. I would have been convinced in all of these great objectives had it not been for the baneful effect in determining influence of such radical groups as those which love to call the Negro Congress into existence here in Washington.

"The Negroes of the South have made great progress, especially in the last 75 years that has ever been made by any race in the history of the world in a like period of time. Three quarters of a century ago we were slaves. Today, we have our schools and colleges, our own merchants, doctors, lawyers, ministers, farmers, school teachers, bankers, and everything that they are coming back to the employ of the paper under the HIGHER wage scale negotiated by the Chemical and Allied Industries whose contract the Guild gradually accepted, with a few minor word changes, for itself!

The Guild repeats its ancient and disproved claim of "overall principles" as justification for its "strike," despite the fact that no such charges were or are before the Board or the NLRB. It avoids mention of the fact that its walkout and the resulting boycott were in fact a contract violation on its own part which was as costly to the Guildsmen as to the employers of the affected departments only.

Here the two American Federation of Labor locals, the Chicago Editorial Association and the Newspaper Communications Association, urged the Guildsmen in their departments by 5 to 1 or better, the eventual outcome of the vote.

The Guild, in its version of the settlement, brags that some of these returning will receive salary increases and carefully avoids stating that in many cases they are coming back to the employ of the paper under the HIGHER wage scale negotiated by the Chemical and Allied Industries whose contract the Guild gradually accepted, with a few minor word changes, for itself!

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Let us consider what the walkout cost the deluded Guildsmen. The men who walked out on their jobs on December 5, 1939, by conservative estimate, lost $740,000 in wages prior to the settlement. THEY CAN NEVER GET THIS MONEY BACK. The Guild, of course, in its boycott campaign, spent a few dollars in this by screaming it would never make peace until all got "back pay." But the fact was that at no point when the successful peace arbitration began. However, the Guildsmen weren't told this until the last moment, when they were hungry and weary enough to take anything to get back to work.

In addition, the American Newspaper Guild has itself directly contributed more than $200,000 over the 17½ months to help carry on the wrecking campaign, under Guildsmen that they were aiding a legitimate labor action.

Other unions in the CIO likewise were swindled of many thousands of dollars to carry on the job-wrecking drive.

Thus the Guild and its affiliates have cost more than $1,000,000 in income—for what?

A. F. of L. Endorses Efforts to Block Abolition of Air Safety Board

Washington, D. C.—Full endorsement of the efforts of Senators Clarke and Bone, Democrats, and Representative Lea to set aside Presidential Reorganization Plan No. 1 was voted by the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. in a letter to President William Green in letters to these Congressional leaders.

The plan would provide to abolish the Air Safety Board and strip the Civil Aeronautics Authority of the power to issue certificates and place regulatory control of air transportation back under the Department of Commerce.

Mr. Green pointed out that a world's air safety record had been established during the five years administration of the Federal agencies affected by this reorganization order. For twelve consecutive months the airlines flew 87,325,145 miles and carried 2,028,917 passengers without a single fatality.

The A. F. of L. President also noted that the Air Line Pilots Association, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, are strongly opposed to the reorganization order.

Contrasting the air safety record of the past year with the fact that 473 persons lost their lives in airplane accidents during the period that the Department of Commerce had regulated civil air transportation, Mr. Green concluded:

"They not let well enough alone?

"The American Federation of Labor heartily endorses your House Concurrent Resolution 60 (Senate Concurrent Resolution 40 to set aside Reorganization Order No. 1 because there never was a proposal that was just and fair to labor than that all Congressmen and Senators who voted for the enactment of the law that you and Senator McCarran successfully sponsored and which has worked out so admirably will again vote with you to maintain in status quo the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 in the interest of air safety for America's air traveling public and the splendid men and women who make up the crews operating the ships."

Fake Chicago Guild Strike Exposed by A. F. L. Writer

(The following article on the settlement of the CIO American Newspaper Guild "strike" against the Chicago Daily News is taken from Don De Michaels, Vice President of the Chicago Editorial Association, to the membership in the form of "Interpretation of Labor a true picture of the situation.)

Now it has ended—the 17½-month boycott against the Chicago Herald-American and its predecessor papers, the Herald-Examiner and the Evening American.

The CIO Chicago Newspaper Guild and its parent, the American Newspaper Guild, which already are shouting "Victory!" in their press, do so in the hope that someone will believe them, have taken a licking that they will be years in recuperating from—if ever they do.

The basis for what the plant election to hold sometime in the next few months will determine if or not the employees of the affected departments only.

Here the two American Federation of Labor locals, the Chicago Editorial Association and the Newspaper Communications Association, urged the Guildsmen in their departments by 5 to 1 or better, the eventual outcome of the vote.

The Guild, in its version of the settlement, brags that some of these returning will receive salary increases and carefully avoids stating that in many cases they are coming back to the employ of the paper under the HIGHER wage scale negotiated by the Chemical and Allied Industries whose contract the Guild gradually

Better Business, More Jobs, Forecast As Employment Gains Are Noted

Washington, D. C.—Better business conditions and more jobs for workers were forecast in the American Federation of Labor's monthly employment survey which reported large employment gains in March.

The outlook is for increasing business volume and employment in May and in the third quarter of the year, the survey said.

"Thus," the survey continued, "we see in operation the economic process which we have been bemoaning for years. High workers' income creates new business. Hourly rates of pay have been held at high levels throughout the 1938 recession, and this year have been extended further in certain areas and created a new demand. That is why business observers are now pointing out that inventories of goods have been reduced since last December and new orders are coming through to factories. These new orders, together with foreign buying, have already checked the downward trend of production and an upturn is expected by May.

"With the higher level of employment this year, WPA and relief rolls will decline. In December, WPA, the second week of April, 1940, included 2,162,000, which compares with 2,757,000 in April last year, a reduction of almost 600,000. Relief rolls in February, 1940, were 1,604,000 as compared to 1,844,000 in February last year, a drop of more than 250,000.

"These three quarters of a million have been dropped from relief and WPA while unemployment has declined by only 550,000. There are still thousands in need who can get employment if work not relief. It is essential that WPA funds be continued until industry provides substantially larger volumes of employment."

AFL UNIONS CERTIFIED AS BARGAINING AGENTS

Washington, D. C.—The National Labor Relations Board announced the following certifications of American Federation of Labor unions as bargaining agents following elections in which a big majority of the employes voted for the A. F. of L. affiliates:

A. F. of L. Metal Trades Department as the sole collective bargaining agency for all employes directed by the Corporation, Pascagoula, Miss. Excluded from the bargaining unit are managerial employes, foremen, office clerks, instructors in the welding school or other craft schools that may be established by the company, watchmen or policemen who are deputized, commissioned or elected by the City of Pascagoula or other public authority, instrument men, inspectors, engineers, and assistant clerks, and checkers.

International Brotherhood of Bookbinders as the sole collective bargaining agency established by a majority of all production and office employes of Simplicity Pattern Company, Inc., Union Hill, Richfield from the bargaining unit are those in the press room, cutting room, composing room, photo-engraving and stereotype departments now under contract with the AFL printing trade unions, as well as supervisory or managerial employes.

WAGE INCREASE WON BY OPTICAL WORKERS

Pittsburgh, Pa.—Following a four months' strike against the Steel City Optical Corporation, members of Optical Workers Union No. 18320, A. F. of L. affiliate, secured an agreement with the company, including the 40-hour week, which is a reduction of twenty hours work each week, approximately $3 a week increase, pay for certain holidays, vacations with pay, and a good seniority rule.

RED EDITOR CONVICTED OF CRIMINAL LIBEL

New York, N. Y.—Clarence A. Hall, editor of the Communist newspaper, The Daily Worker, was convicted of criminal libel by a jury which found that the paper had heard evidence presented before Judge Jeff A. Fridell in General Sessions.

The Comgodaily Publishing Company, former publisher of the newspaper, also was found guilty.